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News and Views

from the Farm Management Staff

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE

Division of Agricultural Economics Programs

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Dear Farm Management Extension Workers:

CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

LEARNER-ORIENTED TEACHING

"In Extension the approach taken rather than the motive of the teacher (agent, specialist, supervision, administration) often makes the difference between success and failure." This is the opening sentence of "An Approach To Effective Teaching," page 9 of Volume I, Number 1 of the new Journal of Cooperative Extension. This article by E. W. Anderson, Illinois, points out that the inductive teaching approach is learner--not teacher oriented. The learner moves from a situation of personal interest to principles. Depth learning occurs when the solution of one problem leads to the recognition of others. The Arkansas farm management staff obtained some "food for thought" from this article and used it in planning farm management workshops for Arkansas dairy farmers. Have you read it?

TRY A QUIZ

A quiz as a management teaching tool? Five or six realistic case situations are enough. Use multiple choice answers. Discussion after farmers or others have taken the quiz and are checking their own answers may center around (1) Business Analysis, (2) Principles, (3) Alternatives. You'll find this technique a real interest-getter. Farmers like the challenge. An example follows -- circle your answer.

Bigsby has been feeding cattle on his 240 acres of corn belt cropland since 1950 with the help of an up-to-date set of machinery and a full-time hired man. He has always fed out about 100 head of calves and 50 head of yearlings a year. Over the past five years he has invested \$16,000 in his cattle feeding operation for buildings and feeding equipment. He and the hired man can't understand why income has decreased with the addition of such an "efficient set-up."

- (a) Cattle feeders can expect losses for several years in a row.
- (b) Should feed all yearlings.
- (c) Increased overhead costs -- hasn't changed labor or volume.

REGIONAL SHIFTS IN COTTON PRODUCTION

Those of you in cotton States will be interested in "Postwar Changes in U. S. Cotton Acreage, Yield, and Production" in the April Cotton Situation. James R. Donald and Chas. B. Wittman point up sharp differences in trends between major cotton-producing regions. They comment on the effects of the Soil Bank, acreage allotments, the

"choice" programs of 1959 and 1960, producer alternatives, and rates of technology application. A good set of national, regional and State cotton production data for the period 1947-1962 follows this article.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Iowa -- Vollmar recently worked with Everett Stoneberg and the six Iowa District Economists. The District men get together with Everett and Herb Howell (now in Peru) three or four times a year or as the need arises. These two- or three-day sessions are fruitful in terms of program ideas. Iowa is using EDP summary and analysis procedures for their farm business association records and is thinking of doing the same with Farm and Home Development records.

Arkansas -- Callahan reports that Harlan, Ott and Thomason are working with Arkansas agents and supervisors toward the refinement of farm management workshops. The workshops will be beamed at key decisions of specific groups of farmers. County agents will be trained to hold farm management workshops for groups of dairymen next winter.

North Carolina -- North Carolina farm management specialists are teaching a process of simplified programming to groups of county agents on a district basis. Lanpher recently attended a training session and reports that the county agents are showing a lot of interest in the approach used by North Carolina specialists. One county is mailing in a linear programming matrix of farms for computer solution.

REGIONAL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Three of the four regional farm management extension committees have recently held spring meetings and, among other important things, elected officers as follows:

North Central -- John Doneth, Michigan State, Chairman; Noah Hadley, Purdue, Vice-Chairman; and Glenn Pulver, Wisconsin, Secretary.

Northeastern -- John Hunter, Rutgers, Chairman; Verle Houghaboom, Vermont, Vice-Chairman; and L. M. Vaughan, FES, Secretary.

Southern -- Sidney Bell, Auburn, Chairman; Stephen Allen, Kentucky, Vice-Chairman; and W. I. Golden, Georgia, Secretary.

ABOUT PEOPLE YOU KNOW

Wayne D. Taylor was appointed Area Farm Management Specialist at Nacogdoches, Texas, effective March 1, 1963.

Gene Ott left his position as County Agricultural Agent in Graham County, Kansas, on April 30, 1963, to accept a position as Farm Management Specialist in New Mexico.

Jim E. Hughes became Extension Economist in Iowa, effective March 25, 1963.

Sincerely yours,

Buel Lanpher

Buel Lanpher
G. J. Vollmar
E. P. Callahan
L. M. Vaughan